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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT
FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY

Tuesday, July 18, 1944

Subject: "CANNING AND BRINING BEANS." Information from canning specialists, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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In many Victory Gardens the pole and bush snap beans are almost ready to gather for eating fresh or saving for next winter. Some will be canned---others salted. Part of the crop may go into freezer-locker storage. Second plantings will be in order, too, for there's no vegetable more popular with many families.

Canning specialists of the U.S. Department of Agriculture give these directions for putting up snap beans correctly. Of course, it goes without saying, that you have to can beans in a steam pressure canner or not at all. If you have no canner of your own, try to borrow one, or take your beans to a community cannery.

These are the steps to follow in preparing and canning your beans: Select the beans fresh from the vines---young, tender, firm crisp pods. Wash them in several waters, until every trace of sand and grit is gone. Lift them out of the water, so dirt won't drain back on them, as it would if you poured the water off. Trim and cut the beans the way your family likes them. Don't get more than one canner load ready at a time. If food stands around, ready but not canned, the chances of spoilage are greater.

Cover the trimmed beans with boiling water, and boil for 5 minutes. Meantime, have the jars clean and hot. When you pack them, take one jar at a time from the hot water. Use clean cloths to protect your hands and to set the jars on, to keep hot jars off the cold table surface. Pack the hot beans loosely. Cover them with cooking liquid, leaving half an inch of head space in each jar. Work quickly. Add a teaspoonful of salt to each quart jar. Work out air bubbles by pushing a knife blade down the sides of the jar.

When you're ready to close the jar, wipe the rim clean, so that no speck of food will keep the lid from making an airtight seal. Have the rubber ring hot if you are using a type of jar with rings. If you are using instead metal lids with rubber compound, dip metal lid in hot water just before using. Adjust the jar lid according to its type. Have two or three inches of boiling water in the pressure canner---so the canner won't boil dry. Place jars on rack so they won't touch each other. Steam must flow all around them. Fasten the canner cover with care. Let steam pour from the open pet cock or weighted gage opening for at least 10 minutes. Then shut the pet cock, or put on the weighted gage.

When the pressure is at 10 pounds, count the time---40 minutes for quarts of beans, 30 for pints, at sea level. If you live at an altitude 2,000 feet or more higher than sea level, you have to process any food canned in a steam pressure canner with higher pressures than 10 pounds. The rule is to add one pound pressure for each 2,000 feet above sea level. Then process the food for the same length of time as called for in the canning directions.

Adjust the heat to keep the pressure steady. When the time is up, slide the canner away from the heat. When the pressure falls to zero, wait a minute or two, but no longer. Then slowly open the pet cock or take off the weighted gage. Unfasten the cover. Tilt the far side up, away from your face.

To take jars out of the canner, grasp them by the shoulder, not by the metal caps. If you are using self-sealing jars, don't tighten them any more. Other types have to be tightened. Let the jars cool on a rack or folded cloth, away from drafts. Next day, look the jars over, and if you used the jars with screw bands, take the bands off if you can do so without forcing them. If a band sticks, cover it for a minute or two with a hot, damp cloth, to loosen it. Do not invert jars to cool.

So much for canning beans. Now for another good way of preserving snap beans---vinegar-brining. Half a bushel of snap beans---or 14 to 15 pounds---will yield about 10 quarts of vinegar-brined beans. Wash the beans, and remove the tips and

strings. Leave the beans whole or cut them into one-inch pieces. Place them in boiling water and let them stand 5 minutes. Cool them promptly by dipping them in cold water.

Pack the beans in a 3-gallon crock or stone jar to within 4 or 5 inches of the top. Cover the beans with two or three layers of thin white cloth and tuck the edges down against the inside of the jar. Cover with a plate or paraffined board that fits loosely inside the jar. Weight it with a paraffined brick or stone.

Mix a gallon and a half of water with a cup and a half of vinegar and a cup of salt. Stir until the salt is dissolved. Pour this brine over the beans until it just covers the plate or board. Keep the beans with brine at room temperature about 70 degrees. Remove any scum that forms every few days, and wash the plate, cloth and weight. Let the beans ferment for about 2 weeks.

To store the vinegar-brined beans, pack them well in clean jars to within one inch of the tops. Fill jars with brine to within half an inch of the top. If there is not enough brine, make more in the same proportions---one and a half cups of vinegar and one cup of salt, to one and a half gallons of water.

Set the jars in a pan of cold water. The water should come to the shoulder of the jars. Bring the water slowly to boiling, then remove the jars. Wipe off the jar rims, and adjust the lids according to the type. Boil pint jars 25 minutes, quarts 30 minutes, in a boiling water bath, with the water covering the jars just as in canning by the water bath method. Remove the jars; complete the seals.

When you serve these beans, remember they have an acid and salty flavor of their own. Drain them and cook with unsalted vegetables, or, if used separately, rinse well, cover with fresh water, and boil 15 minutes or until tender. For a less acid flavor, soak the beans in cold water for a short time before cooking.

